

# Earth Day April 22

## Commentary--Secretary of the Army Earth Day message is 'act today to preserve future'

By  
**PETE GEREN**  
Acting Secretary of the Army

Today our Army continues to wage the long struggle against global terrorism while simultaneously transforming ourselves to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

To achieve success, we must acknowledge the conditions that place greater stress on the world's interconnected human, economic, and natural systems. Most importantly, we must

respond accordingly – we must act today to preserve our future.

On this Earth Day we remind ourselves that, while we remain Army Strong to ensure the defense of this great nation, we must also remain good stewards of our environment to preserve it for future generations.

Ours is a strong, sustainable Army with the vision to address uncertainties at home and on the battlefield, to coexist with local communities,

and to enhance the environment that sustains their well being.

Sustainable practices such as water conservation, greater fuel efficiency, and use of renewable energy allows our Army to travel farther, deploy longer, and reduce dependence on traditional supply lines and reduce our impact on natural resources.

Sustainability further enhances our business transformation by eliminating waste, driving innova-

tion and promoting collaboration across the entire Army.

Ours is a strong, sustainable Army that shares its strength with others.

As we realign the infrastructure of our installations, depots, and arsenals, we will seek opportunities to work with our neighbors to sustain access to shared resources, and create the kinds of communities that promote well being for the entire Army family.

On this Earth Day, we as an Army reaffirm our commitment to

sustainability.

The Army - every Soldier, every civilian, every contractor, and every family member - must make the personal commitment to do everything possible to ensure a strong, sustainable Army.

It is vital that we continue to implement innovative policies and practices that well protect our natural resources for future generations.

Army Strong - today and tomorrow!

## APG Garrison receives DA environmental award

Story by  
**YVONNE JOHNSON**  
APG News

The Aberdeen Proving Ground Garrison was recognized for establishing programs and initiatives that conserve the environment while fulfilling the Army mission during a ceremony at building 305 April 4.

The Secretary of the Army FY 06 Environmental Award is administered by the U.S. Army Environmental Command. The awards honor the Army's top programs in endangered species protection, historic preservation, waste reduction, environmental cleanup and pollution prevention. APG was the first runner-up in the Natural Resources Conservation, large installation division.

Diane Devens, director of the Northeast Region Installation Management Command, presented the award to Col. John T. Wright, APG Garrison and deputy installation commander and representatives from the directorates of Safety Health and Environment, Installation

Operations and Law Enforcement and Security's Marine and Wildlife Division.

"This is an important award," Devens told the group. "It's important for the Army and I'm proud to be able to present it to you."

The team members whose efforts earned the installation the award included Kenneth P. Stachiw, chief, Environmental Conservation and Restoration; Dr. James Bailey, biologist; Rurik Loder, environmental engineer; John Paul, wildlife biologist; Roger Stoflet, agronomist, Directorate of Installation Operations; Stephen E. Wampler, environmental protection specialist; Ralph Plummer, special agent, Natural Resources Law Enforcement; Bill Armstrong, special agent, Natural Resources Law Enforcement; Amy Burgess, endangered species compliance consultant; Carol Swam, DSHE hunting program; and Deidre DeRoia, Integrated Training Area Management coordinator.

The installation received the award due to a variety of achievements over the past two years.

Some of those achievements include:

- APG was the first in the Army to apply for a renewable 10-year permit under the Clean Water Act and has initiated a stabilization design for the first 22 miles of 120 miles of shoreline;

- The Army Compatible Use Buffer program was used to create a 163-acre agricultural conservation easement between the Churchville test track and residential development;

- The Tree City Award was presented to APG by the Arbor Day Foundation in 2006 for efforts with urban forest management;

- In 2004, DSHE began placing spinning reflectors on wires to prevent bald eagle strikes and insulated covers on pole cross arms, resulting in a 60 percent decrease in mortality levels bt 2006;

- The Submerged Aquatic Vegetation program, initiated by the U.S. Army Environmental Command, benefits the installation by stabilizing shorelines and benefits the region by improving water quality and increasing bio-

diversity of the Chesapeake Bay;

- An Eagle Task Forces has been established to review and monitor activities that could impact eagle population. By educating garrison and tenant employees in identifying and protecting this national treasure without sacrificing mission objectives, despite the eagle presence, a record number of firing programs was recorded in 2005; and

- APG has begun to implement low-impact development concepts, including Bayscapes, which are utilized for watershed management.

"APG is a living laboratory for many other Department of Defense agencies that use APG as a test site for research activities," Devens said.

The installation has established partnerships with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Harford Glen, the Aberdeen Science and Math Academy, the Upper Western Shore Tributary Team, National Public Lands Day and the Maryland Freshwater Partnership.

## Eagle Scout project 'is for the birds'



Photos courtesy of MATTHEW L. PROCELL  
Matthew L. Procell, a 17-year old with Boy Scout Troop 1234, mounts a Peterson Nest Box for bluebirds on a tree in APG South as part of a leadership service project to obtain the rank of Eagle Scout.

Story by  
**YVONNE JOHNSON**  
APG News

While growing up in Harford County, Matthew L. Procell spent a lot of time around birds. His mother, a member of the Audubon Society and the Harford County Bird Club, often took him along on outings and he grew up learning about nesting habits, migration patterns and other data about species native

to the region.

When it came time for Procell, now age 17 and a life-long Boy Scout, to pick a leadership service project that could propel him to the rank of Eagle Scout, he didn't have to think very hard about it at all.

Last month, Procell led members of Boy Scout Troop 1234 in a wildlife conservation project that involved constructing 24 bluebird hous-

es known as Peterson Nest Boxes and mounting them in Aberdeen Proving Ground South.

The wooden structures are necessary to protect the small creatures' nests, the John Carroll High School senior explained.

"American blue birds are really small," Procell said. "The Peterson boxes keep other birds from taking over their nests."

He added that swallows often show up in the nests but that that was no problem.

"I don't mind swallows but sparrows will kill the blue bird eggs," he said.

In addition, the nest boxes will help conserve and potentially increase the blue-bird population on APG, he explained.

"Good habitat for bluebirds is decreasing each year in Harford County due to loss of farmland and other open spaces due to development," he said. "APG provides potentially good habitat for bluebirds, and placing desirable nesting boxes in good locations should lead to an increase in the population."

Procell said he got the idea from when he used to help his mother and APG biologist Jim Pottie construct and spray paint numbers on blue bird boxes when he was a child.

Also an internist with the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command under a program sponsored by George Washington University, Procell said he became concerned when he looked around and saw how many of the boxes had fallen into disrepair. He went to visit wildlife biologist John Paul with the Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment and



This dilapidated Peterson Nest Box is one of several that were replaced by Boy Scout Troop 1234 under the leadership of Procell.

learned that the boxes could no longer be erected on telephone poles. It was Paul and environmental specialist Steve Wampler, also with DSHE, who advised him on the best areas to place the boxes to attract breeding blue birds.

In addition, Procell arranged for Dr. Mark Johnson, a master bird-bander with the Harford Bird Club and a biologist with the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, to talk to his troop about the need for conservation efforts to aid blue birds.

Johnson has also agreed to serve as the merit badge counselor for scouts seeking to earn

the Bird Study merit badge.

The process included preparing a full job description detailing the entire project from start to finish; listing the materials, funds, personnel and work assignments, and tracking the total hours for each participant. Procell even used GPS devices to document each boxes' location, the degree in which the box is facing, its height and a description of the physical location.

The construction portion of the project lasted three days.

Ten fellow scouts assisted in the construction and posting of the boxes and Procell's parents, Larry and Suzanne Procell, employees with the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, assisted with adult supervision during the project's completion. Larry is also the troop scoutmaster.

The total time for the helper scouts was 124.25 hours and for Procell, from conception to completion, was 215.75 making the total project time 213.75.

Matt Procell's love of birds has not only influenced his life, but his career plans; he hopes to become an Army helicopter pilot.

Procell said the project was both challenging and rewarding.



Fellow scouts, from left, Corey pippin, 12; Caleb Gordon, 13; Geoff Bates, 17; and Benn Cobb, 13, put the finishing touches on Peterson Nest Boxes.